Amendments to the Claims:

1.-15. (cancelled)

16. (previously presented) A method of preparing a first optical component for incorporation into an optical subassembly, said optical subassembly having a top and bottom orientation and comprising a platform defining an upward-facing V-groove with walls of a certain pitch; said method comprising:

(a) defining, in a single photolithography step, the location of

(i) at least two parallel V-grooves in a wafer to define at least one center portion having a reference surface between two V-grooves and a side portion on either side of said center portion; and

(ii) a fiducial location for mounting a first optical element on said center portion between said parallel V-grooves, said fiducial being a certain distance relative to said parallel V-grooves;

(b) etching said V-grooves to define side walls of the center portion;

(c) creating a fiducial at said fiducial location;

(d) securing an optical element to said center portion relative to said fiducial; and

(e) separating said side portions from said center portion along said V-grooves to define said first optical component;

(f) inverting said first optical component in said upwardly-facing V-groove of said platform such that said first optical component is supported by said platform solely by the contact of said sides against said walls.

17. (cancelled)

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein step (b) is performed by wet etching.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein said step (e) is performed after steps (a), (b), and (c).

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein in step (a), defining said at least two parallel V-grooves comprises defining more than two parallel V-grooves are defined such that at least one side portion forms a center portion of a different first optical component.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein said fiducial is a certain pattern of first solder pads on said center portion and step (e) comprises depositing solder material in said pattern.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said first optical element comprises second solder pads arranged in said certain pattern and step (d) comprises passively placing said optical element over said first solder pads and then reflowing the solder material of said first and second solder pads such that the surface tension of said solder material aligns said first solder pads over said second solder pads and thereby aligns said optical element on said center portion.

23. (cancelled)

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein said first optical component comprises a downward-facing edge surface at the top of at least one of said sides, and said platform having a top surface, said first optical component being disposed in said V-groove such that a gap exists between said top surface and said downward-facing edge surface.